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HEADQUARTERS
1ST BATTALION 27TH INFANTRY
(THE WOLFHOUSES)
APO US FORCES 96225

AVTISBB-T

2 August 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report. (RCS: 120V J3-32)

THRU: Commanding Officer
2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division
ATTN: IBDB-T
APO US FORCES 96225

⑥ Operation Ewa Headquarters,
Commanding General 1st Battalion 27th
25th Infantry Division Infantry (The Wolf-
houses) [4] ⑧
ATTN: AVTICA-MH
APO US FORCES 96225

TO: Commander
US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: J343
APO US FORCES 96243

⑱ OACSFOR

⑲ OT-RD-66X044

References:

a. OPOD 28-66 (Revised) (Operation EWA), Headquarters,
2d Brigade, 5 July 1966.

b. OPOD 8-66 (Operation EWA), Headquarters, 1st Battalion
27th Infantry, 7 July 1966.

1. NAME OR IDENTITY AND/OR TYPE OF OPERATION:

Operation EWA

b. Search and Destroy.

2. DATES OF OPERATION: 8-13 July 1966.

3. LOCATION: Hau Nghia Province, west of the Oriental River
and East of the Cambodian Border. (See Annex A, Operations Overlay).

1
DOWNGRADED 3 YEAR INTERVALS DECLASSI-
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4. CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: The control headquarters, 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, directed that TF1/27 Inf conduct an airmobile assault on Obj 1 (XT3207), commencing 080630 hrs July 1966 to establish a battalion base. A second airmobile assault was directed on Obj 2 (XT2808) with one (1) company prepared, on order, to conduct a search and destroy mission on Obj 3 (XT2706). Elements to be airlanded on Obj 2, and possibly Obj 3, were to be extracted NIT 081500 July. Further, TF1/27 Inf was directed to conduct eagle flights in the assigned AO from 9-12 July.

5. REPORTING OFFICER: Lt Col Alvin L. O'Neal.

6. TASK ORGANIZATION:

a. A1/27 Inf (Capt Mayone)

Demo Team, B/65 Engr
1 National Police
1 Interpreter

b. B1/27 Inf (Capt Garrett)

Demo Team, B/65 Engr
1 National Police
1 Interpreter

c. C1/27 Inf (Capt Leski)

Demo Team, B/65 Engr
1 National Police
1 Interpreter

d. Battalion Control

Recon Platoon
AT Platoon
Hv Mortar Platoon
Elem 125 Sig
Elem, 25 MID
Btry A (-) 1/8 Arty

7. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Artillery Support: 1/8 Arty with attachments, [C (-) 3/13 Arty, D (-) 3/13 Arty] DS to 1/27 Inf.

b. How and when artillery employed: On 7 July the 1/8 Arty (-), consisting of a control element, H 1/8, C1/8, C3/13 (Three (3) 155mm howitzers), and D3/13 (two (2) 8" howitzers),

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were prepositioned vicinity Ap Dong Hoa (XT444067). On 7 July, Btry A (-) 1/8 Arty, was attached to TF1/27 Inf and established a fire support base within the TF1/27 Inf Bn defense perimeter on 8 July. The arty battery accompanied the Bn into the AO by airlift, remained within the battalion defense perimeter throughout the operation, and was airlifted back to its Cu Chi perimeter base upon termination of the operation. Throughout the operation, 1/8 Arty supported with preplanned and on-call fires.

c. Results of Artillery:

(1) Artillery defensive concentrations were plotted to encompass the battalion defense perimeter.

(2) After completing a precision registration, the registration piece was adjusted by an aerial observer onto three (3) different targets. The data for replot established by the adjustments aided in identifying landmarks by coordinates on an aerial photo that were not portrayed on the battle map.

(3) Co-location of the 4.2" mortar section and 105mm How battery FDC's, provided a mutual control in the processing of firing data. This close working synergy resulted in economy of fire support and massing of fires as the situation dictated.

(4) Artillery preparations on landing zones and objectives gave the helicopter assault force the advantage of moving into areas that were partially neutralized by the fires.

(5) H&I fires were employed throughout the AO and were delivered by all caliber, from both fire support bases, into areas formally inaccessible to artillery due to range.

(6) The use of WP marking rounds assisted patrols in land navigation to and from ambush sites during the hours of darkness.

(7) Concentrations plotted in support of ambushes were employed with success. On 10 July 1966, artillery and 4.2" mortar fires served as an effective blocking force when a US ambush engaged a ten-man VC patrol. The VC were engaged with small arms. The 81mm mortars were called close-in and howitzer and mortar fires sealed off escape routes for the Viet Cong. This action proved extremely rewarding and netted a total of 6 VC KIA (BC), 2 KIA (poss) and one captured VC (WIA).

(8) Enemy automatic weapons firing hampered free movement of the C&C helicopter during a two (2) company sweep along the densely foliated area near the Oriental River. The firing was silenced after artillery was employed against it.

d. Army Aviation:

(1) How and When Army Aircraft used:

(a) Command and Control aircraft for ground operations.

(b) Airlift of troops and equipment to and

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from the AO.

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(c) All resupply

(2) Results of Army aviation: Army air support was a decisive factor in accomplishing the mission in operation EWA. The helicopter support provided TF1/27 Inf with a high degree of flexibility and mobility. The 116th Aviation Company (Airmobile) was in direct support of TF1/27 Inf throughout the operation, and presented the battalion with a quick reaction capability. The availability of choppers also enabled TF1/27 Inf to execute a maximum number of missions throughout the operation over a very large assigned AO. As a result, the VC were continually harassed throughout the day by forces ranging from rifle fire teams to company sized elements.

8. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Enemy situation prior to operation: The assigned area of operation has long been the operational area of the 267th and 269th Main Force Battalions of the Dong Than 2 (DT2) Regiment, the 506th Local Force Battalion, the C2 Local Force Company, and the C120 Local Force Company. Numerous platoon and squad sized guerrilla forces were also known to be located in the area. The 267th and 269th battalions had established a pattern of operating in close proximity to the Oriental River unless forced to withdraw to the Cambodian Border area due to the pressure of US or ARVN operations. The 506th battalion has generally operated in and around the "Horseshoe Area" of the Oriental River (XS5693). The C2 company had a past history of operating along the West side of the Oriental River and it has been generally believed that this company has provided security for movement of VC supplies into a location vic XS5493. The C120 company generally operated in the vic of the HIEP HOA Sugar Mill located vic XT540C72. Numerous platoon and squad sized guerrilla forces operated out of the many villages and hamlets in the area. Numerous VC supply and infiltration routes were reported to traverse the entire AO. Secret VC bases were reported within and in close proximity to the area. On 25 June 1966, two SPAR reports originated vic XS568923. The area in vic XS490970 revealed intense SPAR activity during the early part of June. A VC headquarters was believed to have been situated in this area. During the month of April, a VCC declared to his captors that four ammunition caches belonging to the LONG AN Provincial Force were located west of the Oriental River vic XT548013, XS460889, and XS550960. These caches were supposed to be located in graveyards and measured 1-5 meters deep and 4.5m on each side. Supposedly, wooden covers were placed over the graves with a layer of sand and cement on top. The cache was camouflaged to appear as a grave. A VC captive reported in early July that THO HO (XT2808) was the site of a VC camp where four US and several ARVN POW's were being held. Other recent reports of VC activity in the area were sixty (60) VC reported to have moved on 8 June from vic XS545382 to XS538923, evaluation F-3; VC platoon

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reported to be located vic XT480015 on 16 June, evaluation F-2; AR fire received on 18 June from vic XT505025 and XT484018; VC ammunition point with forty (40) cases located vic XS548923 on 19 June, evaluation F-3; unidentified VC battalion reported on 20 June to be located vic XS538910, evaluation F-3; 506th battalion supply section reported moving five sampans of rice and ammo on 21 June to location vic XS537910. On 22 June, a 5th SFG agent reported a VC interzone committee had established a supply base near the Oriental River with an economics and finance office location vic XS484962 and a food storage area located vic XS1949

b. Enemy Situation During the Operation: The VC evaded US forces during the period the operation was conducted. Usual guerrilla tactics (employment of booby traps, mines, harassing/sniper fire) were not used extensively. Information from a male detainee indicated that the US and ARVN POW's reported to be at THO LO vic XT2808, were taken to Ba Thu vic XT265035 on 30 June 1966. The THO LO (XT2808) and Coc Ring (XT2806) areas were confirmed as being VC bases or rest areas along a reported supply and liaison route as evidenced by: (1) documents and medical supplies indicating a medical facility, and (2) the large number of fortified bunkers, foxholes, trenches, tunnels, hasty lean-to's, outdoor fire pits, and camouflaged huts. The many bunkers found had no firing ports, could house 5-10 men each, and had an overhead mud cover approximately 1½ feet thick. The bunkers and tunnels were located on small wooded and elevated areas of land throughout the rice and reed fields. Numerous bunkers were also found at DUC HUE vic XT3208. The 269th Bn, DT2 Regt, also reported located at THO MO-Coc Ring area, was reported to have moved to HOA KHANH near canal 3 vic XS498975, on the same day US operations commenced. On 10 July an ambush patrol from Co B1/27 Inf made contact with 10 VC. Interrogation of VC WIA from this engagement revealed that the 10 VC were from the C120 company located at DUC HUE. The VC left their company at MY THUAN hamlet (XT375098), for the 1/27 Inf Base Camp. Their mission was to find the 1/27 Inf CP, locate possible VC mortar positions, and determine US defenses in the area. After completing their mission the 10 VC were directed to join the company at MY THUAN DONG (XT450048). The C120 Company was reported to be composed of 120 men divided into three platoons and armed with 1-60mm mortar, 1-81mm mortar, 2-B40's, 1-57mm RR, 3-30 Cal MG and assorted rifles. Also, on 10 July, section officials reported that the 506th Local Force Bn and the 269th Bn DT2 Regt were located in vic XT4503. An operation conducted on 11 July in the area where the 2 battalions and the C120 company were reported to be located produced no significant contact. On 11 July, documents found at DUC HUE (XT327079), indicated a VC induction and recruiting facility in that vicinity for the entire DUC HUE District. On

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12 July, a VC medic captured by BL/27 Inf, disclosed that the BINH HOA TAY village (XT4300) guerrilla unit, consisting of 70 men, was located vic XT4300, and that a VC medical training center was reported to be located at XS3296. An operation on 12 July along the RACH TRAM river from XT394138 to the Cambodian Border vic XT320133, a reported VC infiltration and supply route, uncovered a large number of sampans indicating a well-utilized waterway. However, no trenches, bunkers, or foxholes, were discovered along the river. After the operation, an interrogation of VC captured revealed that a VC Labor Force Platoon composed of 3 squads and one guerrilla squad operated in GIONG NHO (XS4099), and that a 30 man VC militia platoon was located at GIONG GANG hamlet, vic XT3614.

c. Terrain and Weather: The terrain is typical of the Delta Region of South Vietnam. There are numerous canals, rivers, streams, and flat rice fields. Many of the rice fields are presently overgrown with weeds, and where the water level is higher, fields of reeds predominate. The water level in the rice fields varies from a few inches to waist deep. Elevated areas of land are dispersed throughout the rice and reed fields. The water level in the eastern portion of the AO is lower, and large areas are devoted to farm crops. However, due to the constant afternoon and evening rains, even the elevated areas of land are wet and muddy.

d. Civic Action/Paramar Evaluation of the Population: Civic action conducted during this operation consisted primarily of the evacuation of refugees. Throughout the operational area, units of 1/27 Inf found civilians who desired to be evacuated to areas under GVN control. A total of 264 such personnel were evacuated to Duc Hu (XT4307), where control and responsibility for the refugees passed to GVN authorities. A small number, approximately 20, requested evacuation, but only if their water buffalo were also evacuated. Due to tactical requirements and a lack of suitable transportation for these water buffalo, it was not possible to meet this requirement and the people remained in the area. The attitude displayed by this small group of civilians was considerably different from the vast majority of refugees, who were quite willing to leave all their possessions in order to reach the security of GVN control. Leaflet drops were executed throughout the AO.

9. MISSION: TFL/27 conducts airmobile assault into OBI WAIKIKI (XT3208), commencing 080630 July 1966 to locate and destroy VC forces, supplies, and base areas in AO. Operation will include eagle flights, reconnaissance, patrolling, and heliborne reaction forces to locate and destroy elements of the 267th, 269th, and 506th VC battalions.

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10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

a. PHASE I: B1/27 Inf conducts an airmobile assault into OBJ I (LZ WAIKIKI) at 080630 Jul to seize the old French fort area vic XT326079, and to establish a security perimeter for the artillery battery firing position. At 080645 Jul, Btry A, 1/8 Arty, will be airlifted by Chinook helicopter to OBJ I (WAIKIKI), and will quickly prepare to support TF1/27 Inf units in the conduct of combat operations. OBJ WAIKIKI will become the battalion base.

b. PHASE II: C1/27 Inf conducts airmobile assault into OBJ 2 (TRIPLER) vic XT285085 at 080715 July. Company force will conduct S&D operations in OBJ 2 (TRIPLER) to locate and destroy VC forces, installations, and supplies. Company forces will be extracted by heliborne lift NLT 081500 July and moved to Bn base (WAIKIKI).

c. PHASE III: A1/27 Inf will be airlifted from Cu Chi base at 080715 to WAIKIKI - TRIPLER Objective area. Company will be prepared to be airlifted on OBJ TRIPLER to assist C1/27 Inf in its mission, or be airlifted to OBJ 3 (SUNSET) to conduct S&D operations against VC forces. If A1/27 Inf is airlifted to an objective area other than WAIKIKI, the company will be extracted and airlifted to WAIKIKI NLT 081500 July.

d. PHASE IV: HHC 1/27 Inf will be airlifted from Cu Chi base to OBJ WAIKIKI. LZ time 080800 July. HHC 1/27 Inf will assist in the establishment of battalion defense base.

e. PHASE V: TF1/27 Inf conducts daily eagle flights, reconnaissance patrols, S&D operations, and fast reaction force operations in assigned AO to locate and destroy VC forces.

f. PHASE VI: Operation EWA terminates and 1/27 Inf is returned by heliborne lift.

11. EXECUTION:

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TF1/27 Inf began OPERATION EWA. All elements of TF1/27 Inf were airlifted from Cu Chi to the operational area during the early morning. B1/27 Inf and HHC 1/27 Inf were airlifted into OBJ WAIKIKI (Obj 1) to clear the area and establish a base camp. A1/27 Inf was airlifted into OBJ TRIPLER (Obj 2) to conduct S and D operations. They were later extracted by helicopter and airlifted to battalion base at WAIKIKI. A Btry, 1/8 Arty, was airlifted into OBJ WAIKIKI to provide fire support during the operation.

At 0610 hours, B1/27 Inf, Bn Command Group, elements of HHC 1/27 Inf, and A1/8 Arty advance party, were airlifted from Base Camp

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Cu Chi to OBJ WAIKIKI loc vic XT324081. The base camp was established without enemy contact. A1/8 Arty airlanded at Base Camp Waikiki at 0650 hrs and established an artillery fire support base.

At 0700 hrs, C1/27 Inf was airlifted from Cu Chi to OBJ TRIPLER loc vic XT287076. No enemy contact was encountered and C1/27 Inf began search and destroy operations in northern half of OBJ TRIPLER. During the sweep C1/27 Inf found a camp site for 12-15 VC which had been used 6 or 7 days before. A small cache of medical supplies containing aspirin and penicillin were found. One VCS was captured and evacuated to BAO TRI. Eleven refugees were evacuated to DUC HUE. At 1502 hrs, C1/27 Inf was extracted by helicopter to battalion base at WAIKIKI.

A1/27 Inf was airlifted to OBJ TRIPLER at 0739 hrs, and began search and destroy operations in the southern half of the objective. A1/27 Inf found two small camp sites containing two loose 50 cal rds and two black pajama tops. A family in the area related their belief that 65 VC were operating in the area. One camouflaged sampan was found and destroyed. Twenty-one (21) refugees were located and evacuated to DUC HUE. A1/27 Inf called in a helicopter gunship team to investigate a report of several men in the area. The gunships located several lean-to structures and fired several bursts of MG fire into them with negative results. At 1520 hrs, A1/27 Inf was extracted by helicopters to battalion base at WAIKIKI. The Recon platoon swept the battalion base area perimeter and located several holes which were marked to be destroyed the following day.

At 1526 hrs, one platoon B1/27 Inf departed the battalion base by helicopter lift to investigate a suspected cache located vic XT262060. Recon platoon located the cache and destroyed the following: four (4) tons of rice, 1800 lbs of fertilizer and one cart. The helicopter gunships had made the original report of a suspected cache to the battalion command group. The location of the cache was believed to be a VC stopover point. Huts were of a temporary construction and were well camouflaged.

TF1/27 Inf established six night ambushes within 500 meters of the outside perimeter of the battalion base. All ambushes reported negative enemy contact.

During the day's operations, helicopters were used extensively for aerial recon missions throughout the AO. Constant surveillance was placed over all suspected VC locations in order to keep the VC on the run. Additionally, the helicopter pilots were able to locate targets which were considered to be lucrative in future operations.

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Two company and two platoon sized operations were conducted on 9 July. A1/27 Inf was ordered to return to OBJ SUNSET, Obj 3, to continue searching for VC holdings while B1/27 Inf was to conduct a series of eagle flights utilizing two platoons. C1/27 Inf conducted a platoon eagle flight into the area south of the battalion base during the early afternoon. The Recon platoon continued to sweep selected areas close to the battalion base for the purpose of destroying VC tunnels, bunkers, and known VC houses.

At 0825 hrs, A1/27 Inf was airlifted to OBJ SUNSET vic XT285056 by the 116th Avn Co (Airmobile). Co A made a thorough search of the area. No VC contact was made but A1/27 Inf found numerous articles indicating the presence of the VC. Medical supplies, VC documents, plastic gas masks, expended 30 and 50 cal rounds, and a clay model of a UH-1D helicopter were among the items found.

While on OBJ SUNSET, A1/27 Inf destroyed twenty VC structures, one and a half tons of loose, unhusked rice, ten gallons of gasoline, and one large sampan loaded with a large supply of cooking sauce. The sampan had been hidden and well camouflaged. It was found near a location believed to be a food preparation area for the VC. One woman and two children refugees were found on the objective. Those people were airlifted to the refugee center at DUC HUE. Ten bags of rice were evacuated with the family. A1/27 Inf was extracted from OBJ SUNSET and airlifted back to battalion base at 1440 hrs.

B1/27 Inf conducted two platoon sized eagle flights into objectives YANKEE loc vic XT3210 and X-RAY loc vic XT3311. B1/27 Inf airlanded on OBJ YANKEE at 0921 hrs. No VC contact was made. Forty refugees were found and evacuated to DUC HUE. The platoon found and destroyed eighteen tons of rice on site and evacuated two tons of rice to battalion base.

At 1258 hrs, both platoons were extracted from the two objectives and airlifted to the northeast to OBJ ZULU loc vic XT2910. Here B1/27 Inf (-) swept across an area thought to be a VC route of march. No contact was made, but the company found and destroyed 61 VC structures, one cart, four sampans, and two 105mm duds. Twenty refugees were found and requested movement to government controlled territory. This was accomplished by aircraft. B1/27 Inf was airlifted back to battalion base at 1535 hrs.

C1/27 Inf manned the base perimeter until 1530 hrs. At that time a platoon eagle flight was conducted into an area south of the battalion base loc vic XT3305. No contact was made on two landings in that vicinity.

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Recon platoon conducted a sweep in an area north to north-east of the battalion base. They found and destroyed one sampan, twenty bunkers, eight VC structures, one tunnel and one AP mine. This operation was concluded at 1300 hrs.

The first VC contact of the operation was made at 2100 hrs by one of three ambushes which had been positioned outside the battalion base perimeter. At that time, ambush Tiger personnel observed nine VC moving in a group to their front. The patrol leader waited until the VC were well within his designated killing zone at which time he proceeded to cut down the VC with devastating fire. The leader had fired the first rounds into the VC group, one of which detonated a rifle grenade carried on the VC's belt. In turn, two other grenades exploded. While SA, AW, and M-79 rounds were being fired, mortar fire was called in on the group. The VC were unable to return a single round of fire. At first light, the patrol located two Chicom carbines, one US carbine, two US M-1 rifles, one US Thompson sub MG, two rifle grenade launchers, two cartridge belts and 300 rds of SA ammo. The VC lost six KIA (BC) and two KIA (Poss). One VC (WIA) was captured by Recon the following morning. The Commanding General of the 25th Inf Div personally decorated the patrol leader the following morning.

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Operations conducted on 10 July were executed as a result of intelligence gained from VC sources by higher headquarters. Two VC battalions were reported to be located on the west side of the ORIENTAL RIVER vic XT445035. This information was received on the afternoon of 9 July. The Battalion Commander immediately began planning for the new mission.

At 0830 hrs, the 116th Avn Co (Airmobile) lifted two platoons of B1/27 Inf and two platoons of C1/27 Inf into four platoon landing zones loc vic XT454034. The two companies landed without enemy contact. The helicopter fire teams received only sporadic small arms fire. Platoons from B1/27 Inf and C1/27 Inf were on immediate "standby" at the battalion base as well as the helicopters to lift them. In addition, platoons from A1/27 Inf were on thirty minute standby. During the morning, B1/27 Inf and C1/27 Inf swept from the LZ's along the Oriental River, searching for VC forces. No VC contact was made. Gunships continued to conduct recon by fire over all canals in the area without contact. The two companies destroyed thirty VC identified huts, four bunkers and two AP mines in the objective area. Both companies were extracted by air and returned to battalion base at WAIKIKI. Artillery preparatory fires and a preplanned air strike hit the objective area prior to the airmobile assault.

A1/27 Inf remained at battalion base and served as the battalion security and reaction force.

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Recon platoon assumed the mission of maintaining surveillance over the VC bodies at site of ambush Tiger. These were the VC killed the night of 9 July. Recon platoon was also to conduct another search of the area for evidence of VC losses during the engagement of the previous night. Recon platoon found one VC WIA from the ambush engagement. Under interrogation, the VC revealed that at approximately 091800 Jul, he had led a ten man squad from MY THAN hamlet (XT375088) to the 1/27 Inf base to make a recon. At approximately 2000 hrs, his squad was ambushed by US troops. He stated he was the assistant platoon leader of the 1st Platoon, C1, Duc Hue Company. Subsequently, much valuable intelligence information was obtained from this VC. The VC stated that his company was located near XT450048, and that he was to have returned to that location after the recon of 1/27 Inf base. This information was flashed to the battalion commander and B1/27 Inf checked out the area prior to extraction. No sign of the VC company was found. Recon platoon continued to search ambush area and found and destroyed two sampans and five bunkers.

TF1/27 Inf conducted six night ambushes vicinity battalion base. Two of the ambush patrols made enemy contact. Ambush Dodge (XT324080) received some probing fire from an estimated 5-10 VC. The patrol leader reported he believed the VC did not know of his location. The leader called in 81mm mortar fire with unknown results. Area was searched at first light on 11 July with negative results. Ambush Coronet loc vic XT322080, detected noise to their front and observed an estimated 15 VC far to their front. Since the enemy was not in their ambush killing zone, 81mm and 4.2" mortar fire were called in. A search of the area at first light revealed negative results. Ambush Coronet destroyed two sampans when returning to base from ambush site. Gunship teams of the 116th Avn Company continued to conduct recon and surveillance missions over the AO during the afternoon and evening.

New eagle flight targets were located and earmarked for operations on succeeding days. At 2100 hours, a "starlight" mission was flown over the east-west river connecting the Cambodian Border and the Oriental River. This river also marked the north boundary of the AO. The mission involved battalion personnel and three helicopters from the direct support air-mobile company. One ship was used as a control ship and carried two persons utilizing the M-16 rifle with starlight scope. Two gunships followed behind. During the one hour flight, the troopers using the starlight located and marked two VC sampans. One sampan was sunk and one possibly sunk by the gunships.

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A1/27 Inf conducted three platoon sized combat assaults by

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helicopter into three objectives along the Rach Tram River. The river connects the Cambodian Border (XT321133) and the Oriental River (XT394139). LZ's were located at XT346138, XT324133, and XT372147. The concept of this operation was to land the three rifle platoons at locations along the river and have each platoon sweep to the East covering both sides of the river. Since there were numerous sampans and "learn-to" type huts along the bank, and the fact that virtually no people were seen in the area, substantiated the belief that this river was a major location for the VC. Sampans were seen moving on the river at night, and the area had been hit virtually every night with H&I fires.

The air landings began at 0805 hrs and were completed at 0818 hrs. Troops made no enemy contact. A thorough search of the river line was conducted. Rubber boats were used to check inlets and under overhanging growth along the banks. Gunships were used to provide constant surveillance over friendly troops and to locate suspicious ground positions. At 0847 hrs, approximately thirty civilian personnel were noted moving north from the river. They appeared to be heading for the village of Ap Chanh loc vic XT3418. At 0907 hrs, a standby platoon from C1/27 Inf was airlifted to XT332147 where a snatch was executed. Twelve of the fast moving civilians were grabbed, loaded aboard the aircraft and returned with the platoon to the battalion base WIKIKI for interrogation. A1/27 Inf located and destroyed ninety-five (95) VC identified houses, ninety-two (92) sampans, nine CBU's and two Chicom grenade booby traps. One sampan had a load of raw meat stored in it which was destroyed. Several VC documents were found. A1/27 Inf was extracted by aircraft and returned to WIKIKI at 1314 hrs.

3B1/27 Inf conducted a search and destroy operation several hundred meters to the South of WIKIKI between 0830 and 1200 hrs. At loc XT319083, eight shelter bunkers, four VC identified houses and one concrete bunker were destroyed.

Recon platoon conducted a sweep East-Southeast of WIKIKI between 0730 and 1100 hrs. At XT327079, the platoon located and destroyed four VC identified houses. Also found at that location were one US pistol belt, two ammo pouches (one contained VC documents and the other contained two hand grenades), one school bag of VC documents, one bag of medical supplies, one flashlight, and a bundle of bloody clothing. At XT323088 the platoon destroyed eleven bunkers. At XT321086, two tons of rice were found in an abandoned hut. The rice was extracted.

1C1/27 Inf conducted a sweep due West of battalion base. The platoon located and destroyed two bunkers, eight tunnels, three houses and three sampans. This sweep began at 0800 and was completed at 1130 hrs.

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At 1600 hrs, a "snipe hunt" was conducted via XT280100. A squad from the Recon platoon was mounted on two helicopters. A C&C aircraft was used as control and spotter. The concept of the "snipe hunt" was to conduct air surveillance over a rice paddy, locate suspicious people, and drop a squad down and snatch two to four individuals for interrogation. At approximately 1610 hrs, four persons were seen running across a paddy. The squad was landed and a total of four persons were snatched. Gunships escorting the three helicopters flushed several VC in the paddies. Most were armed. Three VC, all armed, were killed (BC). One body and a rifle were recovered. The snatch was made at XT262073. Prisoners were evacuated to rear area Cu Chi.

A starlight mission was conducted in conjunction with the 116th Avn Co but was aborted due to inclement weather. 1/27 Inf established three night ambushes. No enemy contact was made.

12 JULY 1966

One company and three platoon sized operations were conducted on 12 July. A1/27 and C1/27 Inf manned the battalion base, and provided platoon reaction forces for the company sized eagle flights conducted by B1/27 Inf in the SE section of the TAOB. A1/27 Inf and C1/27 Inf also conducted platoon sized sweeps from battalion base 2000 meters to the SW and N respectively. The recon platoon swept the southern portion of the battalion base in search of VC tunnels, bunkers, and VC houses. A1/27 Inf (-) together with C1/27 Inf (-) manned the battalion base, and 1 platoon from A1/27 Inf was positioned at the battalion chopper pad on 15 minute alert in the event B1/27 Inf eagle flight needed rapid reinforcement.

At 0805 hrs, A1/27 Inf departed battalion base and swept 2000 meters along a trail to the SW. A thorough search of the area was made and two empty sampans were destroyed. The sampans had been well hidden and camouflaged, and it was obvious that they were being utilized to transport VC supplies. No enemy contact was made during the sweep and the platoon returned to the battalion base at 1115 hrs. At 1600 hrs, a squad from A1/27 Inf conducted another "snipe hunt," utilizing the same technique which had proved so successful in the past. At XT338142, "snipe hunt" noted a suspicious group of men crossing a rice paddy. The UH-1D's swooped down on the surprised men and picked up a total of 5 individuals. Upon interrogation, one turned out to be a VC, 3 were VCS detainees, and 1 was released.

B1/27 Inf conducted the major operation of the day. The Pn S-3 and B company commander selected, in the SE portion of the TAOB, 3 objectives in close proximity to one another which appeared to be lucrative eagle flight objectives. Shortly before lift-off, the entire area was hit by airstrikes and artillery. At 0805 hrs, one platoon from B1/27 Inf was airlifted into OBJ 1, XS118962. No

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enemy contact was made, but the platoon destroyed 3 bunkers and 14 VC houses. A total of 47 refugees requested to be evacuated. UH-1D helicopters from the 116th Avn Co (Airmobile) airlifted these people to Duc Hue - the GVN refugee collecting point. At 0845 hrs, a second platoon, 2B1/27, was airlifted into Obj 2, XS415985, and immediately encountered VC sniper fire. A squad from the B1/27 Inf standby platoon was called to reinforce the element on Obj 2, and gunships peppered the entire area with devastating fire. Enemy losses totaled 2 KIA (BC), 1 VCC, 14 VCS, 40 VC houses, 1 VC cart, 20 bunkers, and 2 bags of documents. At 1124 hrs, the platoon at Obj 1, was airlifted into Obj 3, XS399994, where 12 sampans, 3 bunkers, and 14 VC houses were destroyed. 23 refugees were evacuated to Duc Hue. While the search was being conducted, the platoon received sniper fire from a position approximately 200 meters west of Obj 3. The platoon deployed to the area, killed 3 VC (BC), captured 1 Mauser rifle, and 1 wallet with documents. At the conclusion of the operation, all B1/27 Inf elements were airlifted back to the battalion base, and closed at 1435 hrs.

At 0832 hrs, 1 platoon C1/27 Inf departed battalion base and conducted a 2000 meter sweep to the north, while the balance of the company, together with A1/27 Inf (-), provided battalion base security and a platoon reaction force for the B1/27 Inf operation. At XT312104, the platoon found a plastic bag filled with VC documents; and at XT316101, 9 VC bunkers and two sampans were destroyed. The platoon returned to battalion base at 1245 hrs.

At 120800 hrs, Recon platoon departed the battalion base to make a thorough search of the southern portion of the perimeter. Recon platoon was unable to locate any additional VC bunkers, sampans, or tunnels, and returned at 1110 hrs.

A "Lightning Bug" operation was conducted in the AO between 111231 hrs and 120015 hrs. One sampan was engaged and sunk at XT429072. A secondary explosion was observed in the vicinity of the sampan.

The operation conducted on 12 July is noteworthy in that the operation was controlled by the Company Commander himself. The Company Commander was provided a C&C ship, and sufficient aircraft assets to move his platoon or reinforce as the tactical situation dictated. This allowed the Company Commander to gain a great deal of experience in command and control and also provided the battalion command group with added depth in controlling assets.

13 JULY 1966

TF1/27 Inf terminated Operation EWA on 13 July. The airlift

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back to Cu Chi was to begin at 0730 hrs but a low cloud ceiling prevented the helicopters from landing at WAIKIKI until 0830 hrs. The first flight of helicopters to land at WAIKIKI reported receiving ground fire west of Cu Chi which slightly damaged one chopper. The airlift began at 0830 hrs. The order of extraction was supplies, HHC 1/27 Inf, B1/27 Inf, A1/27 Inf, and C1/27 Inf. The UH-1D helicopters extracted the personnel while the CH-47 helicopters extracted A Btry, 1/8 Arty, the Bn Heavy Mortar Platoon; ammunition, and supplies. No difficulties were encountered during the extraction, and the last element of TF1/27 Inf closed Cu Chi perimeter at 1355 hrs.

12. RESULTS:

a. VC Losses: 14 VC KIA (BC), 3 KIA (poss), 8 VCC, 17 VCS. Captured and destroyed enemy equipment and material included the following.

Chicom carbines	2	105mm duds	2
US carbine	1	gals gasoline	10
M-1 rifles	2	flashlight	1
1917 Winchester 303 rifle	1	wallet/papers	1
Thompson Sub MG	1	bundles of documents	4
rifle grenade launchers	2	bags of medical supplies	3
rifle grenades	6	houses	338
grenade booby traps	2	sampans	134
CBU	3	bunkers	63
cartridge belts	2	outboard motors	3
pistol belt	1	Tons of rice	271
gas masks	2	lbs of fertilizer	1800
		foxholes	8
		carts	3

b. Friendly Losses: 2 MIA (returned to duty)

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Supply

(1) General - All resupply on Operation MIA was by air utilizing both CH-47 and UH-1D aircraft.

(a) Class I

1. Breakfast and dinner - "C" rations
2. Supper - "A" rations

(b) Class III

Battalion established a Class III refueling point for aircraft at forward defense base. Bladders were airlifted in by CH-47 on the third and fourth day of the operation. Empty bladders were extracted by UH-1D. The airmobile company supplied pumps, hoses, and personnel to operate the refueling point. A total of 5000 gallons of JP-4 was expended.

(c) Class IV

1. Battalion was resupplied with the

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following items:

- a. Concertina - 1500 meters
- b. 8' stakes
- c. Sandbags - 43,000

2. All Class IV items were extracted on the last day of the operations by helicopter.

(d) Class V Expenditures

1.	Ctg 5.56 Ball	12,900
2.	Ctg 7.62 Ball	2,240
3.	Ctg 7.62 Ball 5/clip	1,900
4.	Ctg 40mm HE	240
5.	Ctg 81mm Mtr HH M43A1 2/PDF	421
6.	Ctg 81mm Mtr Smoke WP W/PDF	68
7.	Ctg 4.2 Mtr HE W/PDF	516
8.	Ctg 4.2 Mtr Smoke WP W/PDF	84
9.	Grenade, Hand Frag	225
10.	Grenade, Hand smoke, green	84
11.	Grenade, Hand smoke, red M18	32
12.	Mine - Anti-Per Claymore M18A1	93
13.	Signal Illum, Red Star Pocht	4
14.	Signal Illum, White Star Cluster	16
15.	Eng Demo Block-TNT (1 lb block)	450
16.	Caps, Blasting, Non Elec	135
17.	Fuze Blasting Time (ft)	250
18.	Igniter Time Fuze M2 w/proof	74
19.	Flare Surface Trip M49A1	109
20.	Ctg 105mm HE	2201
21.	Ctg 105mm Smoke WP	160

(e) Water

- 1. Battalion was resupplied at the rate of 2 gallons per man per day.
- 2. Total resupply of water - 5000 gallons

b. Maintenance - Normal maintenance of weapons and equipment was conducted prior to, during, and after the operation.

c. Medical - There were no serious casualties during the operation. All Medevac was by air. Non-serious casualties were evacuated by resupply ships during normal operations. There were no friendly battle casualties.

d. Transportation - Movement of personnel and supplies was done by air. The DS 116th Avn Company (Airmobile) adequately met the transportation requirements of TF1/27 Inf.

e. Communications: During Operation Ema, TF1/27 Inf utilized the normal FM communications available to the battalion as supplemented by AM and VHF means. FM communications were effective within the AO. However, it was necessary to establish a retransmission station at the Duc Hue Sugar Mill loc vic XT435072. This

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retransmission station provided the battalion with the capability for communicating between the forward defense base and Cu Chi base camp, a distance of 30,000 meters. AM communications were provided by the use of USAF radio, the AN/PRC 47. This capability was utilized on several occasions at night when atmospheric conditions contributed to very poor FM communications over great distances. A VHF capability was provided by the division 125th Signal Battalion. The AN/PRC 69 was modified in number of channels and sized to fit on the bed of a 3/4 Ton truck and trailer. This VHF equipment provided the battalion with sole-user, common-user, and landline teletype means. By modifying the VHF equipment to the 3/4 Ton truck, the entire package was air transported to the objective area by the CH-47 helicopter. In addition to radio communications, the normal landlines were established within the battalion forward defense base.

14. Special Equipment and Techniques:

a. The battalion utilized the small man-racked three man rubber boat extensively during Operation Ewa. These boats weighed approximately fifteen pounds and were usually issued two per infantry squad for a given tactical operation. The boats provided an excellent means for the infantryman to gain access to deep canals where they could successfully conduct searches for hidden sampans and caches of VC supplies. Small air tanks were carried in order that the boats could be inflated wherever needed.

b. The battalion, in close coordination with the supporting airmobile company, developed a method of "snatching" suspected personnel off the ground through the use of an infantry squad mounted aboard a UH-1D helicopter. It was soon learned that shortly after the battalion began to close into the forward defense base each afternoon that indigenous personnel began to roam the rice paddies in small groups. These people gave the appearance of working in the paddies. Since the area of activity was one of questionable loyalty, it was determined that these people, if caught, might be of some intelligence value. A hunt was organized consisting of a command and control helicopter carrying the ground commander and the air team commander and two UH-1D's, each carrying an infantry fire team and a helicopter fire team. The concept of this operation was to have the C&C aircraft orbit the snatch area to locate suspects. Once the suspects are located, the fire team lands on either side of the suspects. The suspects are then brought aboard and returned to base. The fire team provides surveillance and suppressing fire if necessary. This concept was executed on two occasions at around 1700 hrs in the afternoon. On the first attempt, four suspects were apprehended and three VC, all armed, were killed. On another day, five suspects were apprehended. Of these five, one confessed to being a VC, three were held as suspects

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and one individual was cleared and released. The 1/27 Inf has coined the term "snipe hunt" to this concept. The snipe hunt is extremely effective in the type of "open country" terrain found in the AO. It is also imperative that the unit get to know the area well and that locations for "snipe hunts" be carefully selected.

c. For the first time, the battalion utilized a Starlight scope from a helicopter. The AO contained many streams and canals which were suspected locations for the VC. The great number of sampans found in the area left no doubt that supplies were being moved throughout the area. The battalion and the direct support airmobile company executed two starlight missions at night. The first was successful in that two large sampans were sighted, one destroyed, and one possibly destroyed. The second mission on a succeeding night was not successful due to inclement weather conditions. One UH-1D was utilized as a starlight ship, 1/27 Inf personnel used the starlight scope mounted on the M-16 rifle to locate the enemy, then opened fire to mark the target. Trailing the starlight aircraft was a helicopter fire team that engaged the target after the marking was accomplished. This concept is good and works well, especially in areas where there are numerous canals and rivers.

15. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

The provision of a direct support airmobile company to the Infantry battalion for the entire period of an operation afforded the commander an unprecedented opportunity in developing his operations. Having aircraft at his disposal enabled him to launch a maximum number of airmobile operations varying in size from fire team to company over a very large operational area. Flexibility was also materially increased since the battalion was able to rapidly hit targets of opportunity throughout the AO, and reinforce rapidly as the situation dictated. Aerial resupply of the entire battalion task force was successfully integrated into the overall plan for effective usage of the airmobile company. During the six days of actual operations, plus the planning time prior to the first day, the battalion commander, the staff, and personnel of the airmobile company were able to develop the finest professional working relationship.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. That whenever possible, consistent with available aviation assets, an airmobile company be placed in direct support of the infantry battalion when that battalion is operating in an isolated area and far removed from its home base. The same airmobile company should remain in DS during the period.

b. That an infantry battalion and preferably the 1/27

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Inf conduct future operations in the same area of operations from time to time.

c. That a VHF radio mobile package, which is capable of being airlifted by available helicopter assets, be made available to the battalion when operating from a fire support base in an isolated area for several days.

d. That GVN civic action teams be trained in the handling of refugees and made available during operations in isolated areas where GVN influence is virtually unknown. These trained Vietnamese people would actually handle the evacuation of refugees utilizing US transport. The entire effort would thus be less of a US show.

Alvin L. O'Neil
ALVIN L. O'NEIL
Lt Col, Infantry
Commanding

Annexes:

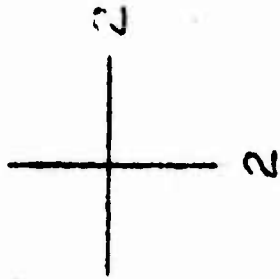
A- Operations Overlay

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Annex A (Operations Overlay) to Combat After Action Report to GPOD 8-66 (Operation Ewa)
dtd 7 Jul 66

Ref: Map, RVN, 1:250,000 Sheet NC 48-7

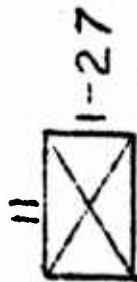
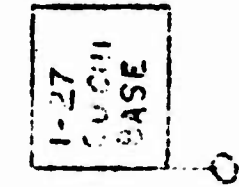


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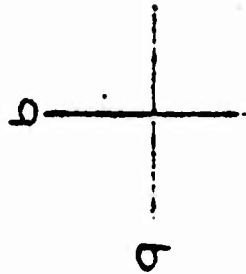


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